

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Fech, Flowers, Franti, Konecky, LaCost, Nickerson, Schubert, Shea

**Absent:** Anaya, Berg, Lindquist, McCollough, Stock

**Date:** Wednesday, July 14, 2010

**Location:** Faculty Senate Office, 420 University Terrace

**Note:** These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.

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### 1.0 Call to Order

LaCost called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

### 2.0 Dan Carpenter, Director of Parking and Transit Services

Carpenter reported that he was asked by administration to look at transit operations to see if any savings could be found. He stated that a consultant was hired to evaluate our fleet of buses and to look at the university's relationship with StarTran to see if any savings could be identified. He pointed out that one of the main issues identified is the connection between city and east campuses.

Carpenter reported that the consultant found significant areas where improvements could be made. He noted that the campus routes served passengers mainly in one direction and did not provide a good link between the R street garage and the rest of the campus.

Carpenter stated that a solution to the problem was found by combining UNL routes with StarTran routes. The result is a better route around city campus. Essentially two routes were created from one route. He noted that this will be very helpful for faculty and students who interact between the Beadle Center and Manter Hall.

Nickerson stated that the faculty was told that they should not schedule large classes on east campus because the current buses could not handle a large number of students. Carpenter stated that one of the problems is that the UNL buses can only carry 50 people. He noted that this might still be an occasional problem but the new transit routes should be able to provide much better service.

Fech asked where improvements were made over the old transit system. Carpenter reported that previously complaints were made that the transit routes did not provide direct service to particular parts of the campus but this has now been changed.

Carpenter stated that changes in the use of perimeter parking is allowing for some of the changes in the bus routes. He noted that perimeter parking is down by almost 1500 from ten years ago when it was first available. He reported that there will still be some perimeter parking and an on-call van service utilizing two vans will be used for these lots.

Carpenter stated that the restructuring of UNL bus resources from the perimeter lots and changes in the 19<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> street route will be used to operate a new intercampus route that travels in a counterclockwise direction via 27<sup>th</sup>, Vine, 14<sup>th</sup>, Salt Creek, 9<sup>th</sup>, P, 12<sup>th</sup>, R, 18<sup>th</sup>, P and 23<sup>rd</sup> street and returning to east campus via Vine to 27<sup>th</sup> and Holdrege streets. He noted that the StarTran buses will run the clockwise route around the campus. He stated that the new service will operate every 10 minutes until 6:00 pm, with four buses on each route, and then every 20 minutes until midnight with two buses on each route.

Konecky asked if the buses will no longer be called shuttles. Carpenter stated that the change creates a bus system. He noted that the transit system was changed after graduation in May and data is already showing nearly double the amount of riders.

Carpenter pointed out that the changes are all being done without an increase in fees. He stated that the downside is that there will be no funding to cover the transit system in the summer of 2011. He reported that he will go to the Parking Advisory Committee to discuss how to fund the service during the summer.

Carpenter stated that the consultant stated that one of the problems with the transit system is with the current fleet of buses. He noted that the buses are old and not meant to be transit buses. He pointed out that we do not have the capital to replace the fleet with something substantial. As a result we are in a position to phase out the transit system and outsource it to StarTran. He noted that this could cost \$300,000 more to do. He stated that the administration is considering making this change in the next 3 – 5 years. Griffin asked if the additional \$300,000 would be put on parking permit holders and pointed out that this would be very unpopular since salary increases will probably not be given for the next biennium. Carpenter stated that there is some thought of having student fees cover the cost since the buses are most heavily used by the students. He stated that the consultant pointed out that we have very low student fees for transit services compared to other universities such as Ohio State. The UNL student fee for transit services is \$9 a month whereas Ohio State is \$40 a month.

Carpenter stated that a possible goal is to create a passenger ridership information system which allows riders to check via the web when the next bus will arrive in a particular location. He stated that all that would be needed is to provide the bus number and the information will be available.

Konecky asked if the thought is to separate out the parking permits from the bus passes. Carpenter reported that 70% of the transit system is funded by parking revenue. He stated that the thought is to increase the cost of a bus pass and fund the transit system through the student fees. He pointed out that few people use the transit system to travel to and from parking facilities and reiterated that students are the heaviest users of the buses.

Carpenter stated that one idea is to offer wireless service on the buses. He stated that he is speaking with Associate VC Askren about this and possibly some of the technology student fee could be used to support the wireless service.

Carpenter stated that information about the changes to the transit system and routes will be mailed out to the campus before classes begin. He noted that the new routes will allow the faculty and students to park their cars once and then use the buses to travel between the campuses during the day.

Schubert asked why the idea of moving the cost of the transit system to the students did not come up previously. Carpenter stated that it came up in 2003 with the Parking Advisory Committee. He noted that back then it was believed that people from parking lots were using the service more but this is no longer true now that perimeter parking has decreased significantly.

Schubert asked how much student annual fees would increase if they were to cover the 70% funding needed for the transit system. Carpenter stated that the total cost for operating the transit services is \$1.3 million. He noted that if the cost was split approximately \$900,000 would be paid by student fees and \$400,000 would come from parking permits. Schubert asked what the decrease in parking permits would be if the student fees were used. Carpenter stated that he is not sure that parking permit rates would be reduced much, probably by about \$3 a month.

Schubert noted that the rest of the revenue from parking fees goes for paying debt services. He stated that some faculty members have expressed confusion over why parking permit fees have been used to cover the cost of transit services. Carpenter stated that the parking website (<http://unl.edu/aboutus.shtml>) provides a complete breakdown of the parking and transit services budget, although the information provided needs to be updated with this year's information.

Nickerson stated that he has been listening to people talk for many years about an easier way to commute between the campuses. He noted that years ago there was some talk about getting a trolley or light train service between the campuses using the old existing rail lines in town, and he wondered if it would be possible to create a service between the east, city, and innovation campuses. Carpenter stated that it was probably wishful thinking to provide such a service because of the cost.

Schubert stated that he doesn't understand why such a proposal wouldn't be considered as part of a solution in the consultant's report. He asked where the configuration of new buses fits in. Carpenter stated that the buses we have are only made to last for about 12 years and our transit system was created in 1997.

Schubert asked why we need new buses if the current buses are running empty at times. Carpenter stated that the system needs to be improved if people are going to use them. He pointed out that the ridership is expected to double with the new routes. He pointed out that the buses we currently have are not built to operate 17 hours a day.

Schubert pointed out that a light rail system between the campuses would be more energy saving. Shea wondered if the cost of it could be added on to innovation campus. Nickerson pointed out that it might be possible to get some stimulus money to develop this system and having such a system might draw more companies to innovation campus and facilitate communications between the three campuses. Fech noted that the consultants working on innovation campus discussed having some kind of linkage between the three campuses because they did not want companies to feel isolated on innovation campus.

Carpenter stated that he hopes with the changes in the transit system that discussions will begin about innovation campus. He noted that buses on east campus will run every five minutes and every ten minutes on city campus. He stated that there will be twenty minute service in the evenings and in the summer. He stated that the full implementation with Star Tran and UNL will be presented to the campus in the beginning of the semester. He noted that bus passes cost \$10 a month and can be used with StarTran.

Nickerson asked if Carpenter was involved with the planning of innovation campus. Carpenter stated that he has had some limited involvement but parking needs to be revisited now that the arena is going to be built. He noted that a parking garage is being proposed and this can be used for events at the Devaney Center. He pointed out that a fee will be charged for parking during these events.

Carpenter reported that Holdrege from 33<sup>rd</sup> to 48<sup>th</sup> street will soon be under construction for street widening and resurfacing.

Nickerson noted that part of the Antelope Valley Project calls for the closing of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> streets. He asked if this is still going to occur. Carpenter stated that it is part of the campus master plan but he does not know whether the closing of the streets is a stipulation in the Antelope Valley Project. Nickerson asked if there were any impediments for closing the streets. Carpenter stated that he is not sure but it could be that the university has to buy the streets and the underlying structure of the streets is unknown.

Franti asked why permit holders are denied parking during football games. Konecky pointed out that the revenue generated during football games for parking helps to keep the cost of employee's parking permits down. Carpenter noted that there are some designated areas for faculty and staff members to use during games.

Flowers asked if there was going to be any restrictions for parking during the Special Olympics. Carpenter stated that those involved with the Special Olympics can park in the Avery Street garage and in the student commuter lot to the west. Flowers asked if the faculty/staff lots will be available. Carpenter stated that parking on campus will be the same as usual and someone will be posted at each of the lots to direct non permit holders elsewhere.

Carpenter stated that anyone with questions should feel free to contact him ([dcarpenter2@unl.edu](mailto:dcarpenter2@unl.edu)) or the Parking & Transit Services Office (472-1800).

### **3.0 Announcements**

No announcements were made.

### **4.0 Minutes of 6/30/10**

Shea suggested that Dietze and Clayton be contacted for further clarification on some of the issues they addressed.

### **5.0 Unfinished Business**

#### **5.1 ARRC Member**

Griffin reported that the faculty member selected by Lindquist to replace Bradford on the ARRC is not eligible because there would be two people from the same college which is not permissible in the committee's syllabus. The Executive Committee suggested another faculty member to serve.

### **6.0 New Business**

#### **6.1 Faculty Senate Representative Needed for August 14 Undergraduate Commencement**

Nickerson stated that he would seriously consider representing the Senate at the commencement ceremony.

#### **6.2 Agenda Items for Meeting with the Chancellor**

The Executive Committee suggested the following items for discussion with the Chancellor at the July 28<sup>th</sup> meeting:

- Update on Faculty Apportionment guidelines

- Likelihood of a Legislative Special Session

- Budget

- Innovation Campus Updates – Transportation to and from the campus and who is involved in the planning of this.

- Future Closing of 17<sup>th</sup> Street – Concerns of Safety for Students

- Update on further academic consequences of joining the Big Ten

The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, July 28 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in 201 Canfield Administration Building. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Pat Shea, Secretary.